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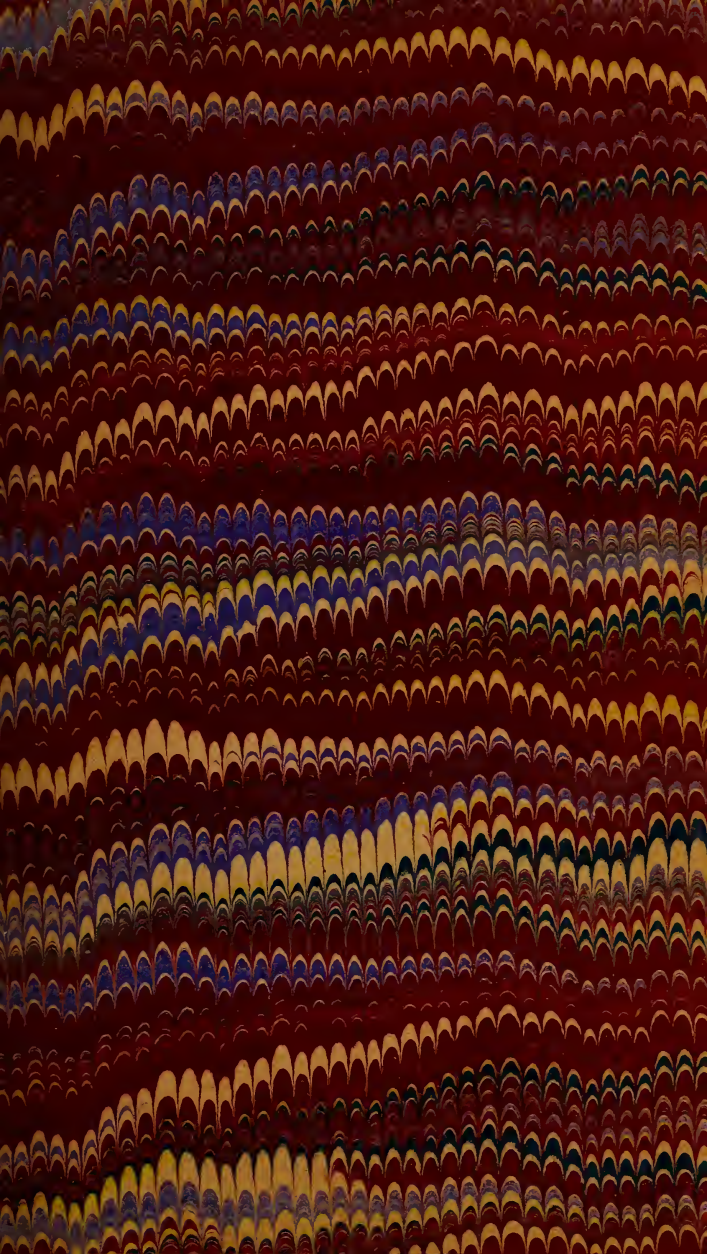
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



AN ACCOUNT
OF THE EARLY PART
OF THE
Life, and Convincement
OF
THOMAS MELHUISH,
LATE OF TAUNTON.

Given by himself in a Letter to a Friend:

Together with

A Short Account of his subsequent Life, &c.

With EXTRACTS from some of his LETTERS
On Religious Subjects.

*Collected and arranged by two Friends,
to whom he committed the Revisal of his Papers.*

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AN ACCOUNT, &c.

IT may not be amiss to introduce the following letter with a short account of our friend in his early life.

He was born at Bradninch in Devonshire, about the year 1737, of parents not then professing with Friends: but his mother soon afterwards joined the Society, his father continuing in profession with the national church.

Having learnt the business of a taylor, he travelled to London for employment as a journeyman in that line, about the twentieth year of his age, and having been previously brought acquainted with the principles of Friends, he soon formed an intimacy with some in that city, particularly the family of the Marshmans, who kindly noticed and entertained him; which doubtless proved a singular favour to him, and made a lasting impression of gratitude on his mind, opening the way to a correspondence after his return

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into

into the country, from whence it appears he addressed a letter to James Marshman, of which the following is an extract.

2d Mo. seventh, 1758.

RESPECTED FRIEND,

THE many and repeated favours received at thy hands, call for my thankful acknowledgements; and I make use of this opportunity to return them, hoping I shall always retain a grateful sense of thy kindness manifested to me at a time, wherein my poverty and distress (spiritually speaking) were very great; and as from an observation I have made, I believe thou art mindful of the apostle's advice, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers," I doubt not but thou hast largely experienced the blessings which attend such a pious disposition, and that they may be continued to thee is my ardent desire.

The humble followers of the meek and crucified Jesus, whose desire it is to be found walking in the path of self-denial, and are
earnestly

earnestly concerned to attain a thorough resignation to the divine will, are oftentimes drawn to look back and take a sorrowful prospect of their once fallen and lost estate; and under a humbling sense thereof are made to adore the worthy name and magnify that powerful arm, by which they were called and delivered from darkness, and brought to a state of marvellous light; and from blindness and ignorance to be measurably acquainted with the hidden mysteries of the everlasting kingdom: these being filled with a sense of their unworthiness, are at all times ready to acknowledge that it is not in the least by any might, strength, or even desire of their own, but through the free, universal love of God, by the revelation of that invisible power in their hearts, which made Felix tremble, that they are preserved from the sins and gross enormities by which they were once led captive; and as by a steady obedience to divine grace they are kept in a humble state, and know themselves to be (what they really are) poor dependant creatures, insufficient of themselves to do, or even think any good, they have nothing to

glory in but the cross of Christ, which, by true faith in it, they have happily experienced to be the “power of God unto salvation.”

The man out of whom the legion of devils was cast, was found sitting at the feet of Jesus; and being clothed with a right mind, was sent to declare unto others, what great things God had done for him, and a testimony was given him to bear to that mighty power which had been so wonderfully manifested for his help and comfort; which, upon an examination of what I once was, and (through divine grace) what I now am, permit me to say, with awful reverence to the Father of all my mercies, bears some resemblance to my present state, having sometimes a testimony given me to bear to the worthy name of Jesus, and through the influence of divine love, which I feel to be largely shed abroad in my heart, am made willing to declare unto others, what God (through the abundance of his mercy) hath done for my soul: a short account of whose gracious dealings with me, I here present to thy view, as likewise to that of thy family, with sincere desires that it may tend to their edification and comfort, and stir
up

up their minds steadily to persevere in that way which leads through many tribulations to the kingdom of glory.

God, who in the might of his eternal power, gave the awful command, Be thou! in due time separated me from my mother's womb; and his paternal regard and providential care were largely manifested in carrying me through a series of bodily infirmities in my infant state: and I was early brought to a sense of his divine goodness, and sometimes in my very young years, was led into an admiration thereof.

It may not be improper to observe, that soon after my birth, my mother, who had long been seeking the beloved of her soul, and inquiring for him amongst the blind watchmen of the night, became convinced of the truth, and being brought off from the shadowy, came to inherit the substantial part of religion: the necessity of a holy life being strongly impressed on her mind, an earnest concern was raised in her, that her offspring might attain thereto; and she made use of every opportunity to instil into my tender mind, the principles of virtue and religion. This

I mention, because it was of great advantage to me, for her prudent counsel and exemplary conduct had begotten in me such an awe and esteem for her, as many times prevented me from joining in those things which I was much inclined to.

But to return to my own state:—although when about the sixth year of my age, I felt something of the visitation of divine goodness often tendering my heart, and begetting desires in me that I might be brought to an acquaintance and communion with my Maker, (of which I remember to have formed some idea, by remarking Samuel's being called of the Lord when but a child: which passage, my mother often repeated to me, and gave me such advice thereon, as my tender age was thought capable of receiving;) yet such prevalency had the evil in me, that I was often drawn to do wickedly; and being of a viciously active and mischievous disposition, was, when among my companions, as forward (and probably more so) as any of them to start mischief, though with so much caution, as, if possible, to prevent its coming to my mother's knowledge; for on such occasions

sions I was always sure to meet with correction, and that accompanied with such mild, persuasive reasoning, as frequently I remember drew tears from my eyes.

Near this time (being about the eighth year my age) I was often powerfully visited and the good seemed to prevail in me: I was fully convinced, (as far as my capacity at that age could rightly distinguish) of the principles of truth, and loved to go to meetings, especially when I knew of any travelling friends being there; which notwithstanding my father was in profession with the national church, I had frequently an opportunity of doing; and my sober and solid deportment, was noticed by some; but this continued but for a short time, for being about this time placed at school and thereby more out my mother's notice than I had formerly been, the enemy soon prevailed, and I made use of the liberty I now had to improve myself in those vices I had a great propensity to. I wish parents would be very careful how they station their children in this respect: though far be it from me to reflect on the conduct of mine; they (my mother

especially), acting with great care therein, as far as their circumstances would permit; but for want of being placed with a religious master, I think I suffered loss.

About the twelfth year of my age, my father died, and some time afterwards I was taken from school, in order to be put apprentice; and there being no person near of our profession very suitable to place me with, for want of a better, I was bound to a parish-clerk, about five miles from the place where my mother lived, and seven from a meeting; though I am certain had my friends known the irregularity and bad conduct of that family, they would not have put me there.

Being now of a bad disposition, and placed among those who were rather worse than myself, I soon threw off the restraint of religion, (to which I had hitherto paid some regard) and became openly profane.

Concerning this part of my life let it suffice to say, that for about three years and a half, my conduct and behaviour were such as filled the heart of my dear mother with unutterable sorrow; to see (as she sometimes expressed herself)

herself) the son of her hopes ungratefully to flight the merciful visitation of heaven, (which as I have hinted, was wonderfully extended to me in my very young years) and precipitately run the way to destruction. Oh how she mourned! For me she went pained as a woman in travail, and often scattered her tears in solitary places: for me her hopes seemed gone; and she expected nothing else but on my account to lie down with sorrow in the grave. I could largely dwell on this affecting subject, but would be brief, and hasten to that happy time wherein the merciful visitation was again extended; and I could with great propriety and feeling experience, make use of the apostle's expression, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I was chief." My being thus divinely reached, fully confirmed me in the belief of the universality of the love of God, for had any been, as some absurdly affirm, eternally decreed to damnation, I think I had been one.

When I had continued from about the thirteenth to the seventeenth year of my age in a known violation of the divine commands, the voice of the Lord, which I had often
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heard:

heard calling unto me in the cool of the day, and gently moving on my mind, was now more powerfully lifted up. Where art thou? was founded in my ears in such a manner as evidently denoted that divine wrath and indignation were justly kindled against me; and although a strong and fervent cry was raised in me, that I might be delivered from the body of sin and death, in which I saw myself plunged, I had no hope; all seemed vanished, the heavens were as brass, and the earth as iron; nothing in either, I thought, could, or rather would, afford me comfort; I saw him whom I had pierced with my sins, and my soul was wounded with the sight. After I had continued for some time in this mournful state, the Lord, who in judgment remembers mercy, looked upon me, and as I was gradually brought more and more under the humbling hand which was at work in me, by the purifying operation of the heart-cleansing word, a secret hope would at times arise, and give me a faint prospect of what, if I continued humble, I should one day experience: though this was sometimes the case, yet inexpressibly deep were the agonies, and
bitter

bitter distress I at this time underwent on a remembrance of my past life; and the being deprived of the opportunity of seeing or conversing with religious persons, (there being scarcely one in the place where I lived) did not a little add to my affliction, for being continually exposed to temptations, and no one to encourage me in the way of well-doing, none to lend a helping hand, or assist, what I can scarcely at that time call myself, a traveller Sion-wards, I frequently fell into those things again, for which I had so deeply suffered.

Thus I continued in this tossed, afflicted, and comfortless situation for a considerable time, but at length the day came wherein liberty was proclaimed to the captive, and the gospel sound of peace and salvation declared in my soul; the heavens appeared with a serene and beautiful aspect, and it may be said the very morning stars sang for joy, and welcomed the returning prodigal. Thus I was brought to witness that the peace of God passes the understanding of the natural man, and I often felt the enjoyments of divine favour; and now it appeared clearly

to be my duty to leave off going to the public worship, which since my apprenticeship I had been in the practice of: as likewise to use the plain language: both which in time I gave up to, but not so fully to the latter, as I ought to have done; so great was the cross, that I often thought I should much rather choose to give up my life: but my eye being kept to him whose omnipotent arm had been largely manifested for my help, he made way for me where no way seemed to be, and supported and carried me through the close baptizing exercises which attended my giving up to the heavenly vision.

Thus, from a lost fallen state in which I once was, through the unutterable love and mercy of God I am brought at times feelingly to know that my Redeemer lives: how shall I celebrate his praise or enough proclaim his abundant mercy, but by freely devoting the future part of my life to his service: may therefore thy prayers with those of thy dear family (to whom I feel myself united in the bonds of indissoluble love) ascend for my preservation: my exercises to this day are great, my besetments close, and temptations powerful;

powerful; and therefore when it fares well with you, remember me, as, if ever favored solemnly to approach the throne of grace, and admitted to worship in the holy of holies, I shall you.

May these lines, my dear friends, encourage you to persevere and steadily walk in the way of the cross, that there may be raised from amongst you, testimony bearers to the saving powers thereof. For my part I freely confess the love of God hath so influenced my mind, that I have sometimes thought I should be willing to run to and fro in the earth, that I might teach transgressors his ways, and that sinners might be converted unto him: but it is hard to remain under the preparing hand; though it lies heavy upon me, my heart is melted, and I am quite dissolved under the humbling sense thereof. I feel the drawings of immortal love extended in my heart towards mankind; and I am almost ready to warn them, from an apprehension of duty, to flee from the wrath to come: but I must longer remain under the forming hand of him who alone can prepare and qualify his servants for the work he sends them to do.

Finally

Finally, my friends, farewell. I beg excuse for so long detaining you, and now take my leave, and recommend you with myself to the Rock of Ages for preservation; that if ever we meet again, we may have to rejoice in the Lord, and our joy may be full in the God of our salvation: to whom ascend from the heart he hath quickened, thanksgiving, glory, honour, and renown: for he is everlastingly worthy, saith my soul.

THOMAS MELHUISH.

The following letter (without date) appears to have been written to some friend in London, soon after his return from that city.

DEAR FRIEND,

IT is a very awful thing to have a testimony to bear for God; but awful as it is, he hath raised up, and (blessed be his name) is still raising up and qualifying some for that service; and who shall say unto him, "What doest thou?" if in his infinite wisdom he see
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meet to employ the meanest vessels in his house therein. Excuse me, my dear friend, if from the sincere respect I bear, and the unity of spirit I have with thee, I lay before thee the deep concern of my mind, the ardent prayer and breathing of my soul, that I may not miss my way in so important an affair as bearing a testimony for God: I have been led to see, yea, and to partake of the deep and baptizing exercises which these at times pass through. O my soul, mayst thou never faint under the preparing hand, but be encouraged to press forward, remembering that the chastisements of the Lord are tokens of his love, who makes his people perfect through suffering.

I cannot upon the whole think that the deep concern which thou sawest me under, proceeded from disobedience; I confess I many times had some sentences brought to my remembrance, and impressed with some weight on my mind whilst with you; but I did not see my duty in that respect so indisputably clear as I wanted, and I was not in the least willing to act at an uncertainty in so momentous an affair; and the awful sense of
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my being called to so weighty a service as to speak a few words in meetings, took such hold of my mind after I came from the Savoy, as to bring that deep concern upon me; and with many tears was I moved to supplicate the majesty of heaven for preservation, direction, and assistance therein; and methought in answer to my prayers, I felt some degree of the anointing oil poured forth; and since I came home, way hath been made for me, and with much trembling, reverence, and fear, I one day stood up in our week-day meeting, which is but small, and uttered a few words as they were brought to my remembrance; with which some solid friends have given me cause, by the kindness of their behaviour, to think they have unity; but oh, I find my exercises increase, under which nothing can support me but that omnipotent arm which hath hitherto preserved. I find a necessity for a continual warfare that my life and conversation may correspond with that testimony given me to bear, and above all things, that in the exercise of my gift I may be careful never to move till rightly called: I have sorrowfully observed that many who take upon them to exercise

exercise the ministerial function, if they have been rightly called thereto, yet for want of due attendance on the great minister of ministers, have gone from that life, which alone makes preaching of the gospel profitable.

Some time after his return to the country, he removed to Taunton, and married Jane Mullet, then a widow of that town. Here he carried on the business of a Shopkeeper, in which however he met with some difficulties; yet under a variety of trying circumstances it appears he kept in view the one thing needful, the cultivation and improvement of his own vineyard; and (as he found his mind concerned) the labouring for the improvement of others.

About the year 1768, we find him visiting one of the western counties: and after his return he wrote an epistle to Friends of the same county, expressive of his deep concern on their account: from which the following is an extract.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Since I paid you a visit, various have been the thoughts and cogitations of my heart concerning the state of things among you in a religious sense; but amidst the doubts which have attended me, I have not been without a degree of certainty in this comfortable feeling truth, that let things be as they may, the extendings of divine help are mercifully continued in order to the further cleansing, edifying, strengthening, and preserving, according to their several growths, all those among whom a degree of sincerity remains; which divine care seems to be manifested, not only in that you are favoured with some remains of a living ministry, but more especially in that, though many things have occurred to prevent the free circulation of the spring of life among the body in general, in that increasing flowing manner which could be desired, yet you are humbly favoured with a good degree thereof, and but few are sunk to such a pitch of lethargic stupidity as not in some degree to be sensible of its influence;

fluence; and some seem to be so quickened and enlivened thereby, that to feel and enjoy it in this communicating enlarging manner, is become the joy and rejoicing of their souls.

This general view and sense of things, having been present with me, has afforded comfort to my travailing soul, in solid hope, that as you were not forsaken of the everlasting helper, but divine mercy disposed to bear with you yet another year, and continue his cultivating care, some individuals (I wish they may be many) will so carefully attend to the design of the great Lord of the vineyard as to bring forth fruit in proportion to that care which has been richly and freely manifested towards them; yielding subjection to the forming hand in all things; that stript of all false reasonings, carnal comprehensions, and all human selfish mixings whatever, in the understanding and ability the truth alone gives, they may attend to the proper business of the day; watering, planting, or whatever else may fall to their lot; having an eye and dependance on God for an increase both respecting their labours and the particular state and advancement of their own minds.

And

And bear with me, dear Friends, if under the prevalence of divine love I warn the negligent, careless, and lukewarm, (for such there are among you) on whose account I am dipt into deep suffering, and ready to cry out in the mysterious language of the apostle, (including my brethren fellow-sufferers on the same account therein,) " If the dead rise not, why then are we baptized for the dead?" If the determined disposition of their hearts long rivetted to the earth, is to hide their talent therein, and the fixed bent of their minds to grovel in corruption and vanity, and seek no other crown than what the world can give them, why suffer we on their account? If they have bartered heaven for earth, and sold their birth-right for a mess of pottage; if the wild uncultivated nature of Esau so prevails in them as to induce them to offer violence to the second birth, the true seed of Jacob, in which their election stands, why sorrow we at the blessing being taken from them? especially as all our sorrow and suffering respecting them seems to be in vain? Yet read me, dear friends, in my painful feelings on this occasion, while
my

my foul laments that there should be any among you who have thus received the grace of God in vain: I pray God, with my whole heart, their number may never be increased, but that the small remains of life in other weak dwarfish minds, may be so effectually strengthened, that by using all diligence they may be excited to such an holy circumspection, as that their works may be found perfect before God.

And, dear youth, though the affectionate flowings of good-will in my heart, strongly reach toward you, yet being fully convinced divine mercy careth for you, and is immediately influencing your minds to seek true rest; to that gracious succouring care, that nourishing strengthening support, which the bishop of souls is ever ready to communicate, to him that can do all in you and for you; to the good shepherd that puts his own forth, and goes before them, feeding them in the green pastures, and leading them beside the still waters; to him whose vestment is dyed in blood, whose name is the Word of God, do I commend you, and remain,

Your friend and brother,

THOMAS MELHUISH.

The following Letter, addressed to two women friends, travelling in the service of truth about this time, with whom he appears to have felt near sympathy, may not be thought unworthy of a place here.

Taunton, 11th Mo. 28th, 1769.

DEAR FRIENDS,

AS contrary to my intention and the expectation given, I was prevented from accompanying you to Bridport, considering the abrupt manner in which I took leave of you, a kind of debt seemed due, and an acknowledgment of the affectionate nearness and respect I bear you: and although spirits redeemed from the earth, who know the Lord Almighty to be their father, and that by the spirit of his son they are quickened to walk in newness of life, are under divine protection as their constant refuge, yet I have thought, while in our present mode of being, we sometimes receive consolation in an encouraging

raging hint from a kindred spirit, though in an inferior relation: and indeed, this seems to have been the general way of the Almighty's dealings with his people, since from the beginning, it is not many mighty, not many wise, &c. that have been called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise, that no flesh might glory in his sight; but both high and low, rich and poor, strong and weak, might remain in that acceptable self-abasement and humility, which will not fail in due time to exalt them to honour, through their being made partakers of the crown immortal; and notwithstanding by the testimony of Jesus, and spirit of prophecy which many have received, they assuredly know salvation to be come to their houses, yet in every rightly disposed mind, this comfortable sense will tend to promote circumspect walking under the power of the daily cross; that by the virtue thereof becoming more and more crucified to the world, and their affections gradually weaned and loosened therefrom, they may have a certain, distinct knowledge that their salvation is nearer than when they
first

first believed, through the abundant increase of love towards the brethren; and this love working into a constraint upon our minds, would, (were it possible) compel Israel to be gathered; and consistent with the flowings of divine good-will leads again and again to offer reconciliation through the blood of Jesus; yet to the grief of our hearts, this testimony is not received by many among us, but the workings of a contrary spirit have so prevailed, that to deal plainly and honestly we are necessitated to adopt the general language of the spirit to the seven churches, that though there may be a few who have not defiled their garments, and these may be permitted to walk with the lamb in white, for they are worthy; and to whose prevailing intercession it may be owing that the candlestick is not yet removed out of its place; nevertheless, "there are many things against thee;" through the spreading of the spirit of error and deception, it has unhappily so happened: you know it as well as I; and I doubt not are daily sufferers in spirit thereby; so that however it has fared with you hitherto, yet it is much to me if in the course of your journey, the language of
 of

of your hearts be not sometimes, “Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people:” and so thick is the cloud thereof, that the testimony the Lord has given us to bear, does not pierce it; neither is it scattered: the dead are not raised, and our preaching is in vain. But, dear friends, be fervent and patient in spirit, and deep in travail for heavenly help, to enable you to roll the stone from off the mouth of the well; that living water, pure and unmixed, may be drawn therefrom, and the little tender remnant being refreshed thereby, they with you, and you with them, may ascribe all honour and praise, thanksgiving and glory, to the blessed Father and Shepherd of the flock and family.

I long to conclude, which I shall now do with desiring to hear from you: and with the salutation of dear love, in which my wife joins, remain your affectionate friend and brother,

THOMAS MELHUISE.

Although it appears he wanted not for opportunity to engage more extensively in worldly concerns, with a prospect of advantage, yet his religious care not to exceed the bounds of true moderation in this respect, is evinced by the following letter.

To ———

Having thoughtfully considered thy proposal, several reasons concur in my apprehension to render such an union not advisable: but notwithstanding a partnership in the retail trade must be attended with considerably more difficulty than is likely to occur where an opportunity offers for engaging in a wholesale business, and my desire of your continuing in town, would induce me readily to concur in any well founded scheme to that purpose, did I look upon myself at liberty to enter so far into the active pursuits and busy scenes of life as some others may commendably do, without infringing on the rule of duty pointed out by the wise director, who is not wanting to impress the mind with
a language

a language of this kind, " This is the way, walk in it:" but, as from a careful observation, I find much of the comfort and happiness of my life, as well as the prospect of a future rest in glory, depends on my not neglecting the gift that is in me, the most satisfactory reason I can give for my declining to accept of thy offer is, that a growing concern has for some time fixed on my mind to visit the nation of Ireland; and though the present situation of things with me renders my taking such a journey almost impossible, yet I am in hopes that the same good hand who has been my support in many a trying season, will, in his own time, work a way for my discharge of that service, which begins to lay as a debt on me. Under such circumstances, I should be culpable to submit to any farther entanglements, (however advantageous the prospect may be) which had any tendency to hinder my being in the way of co-operating with the grace of God, towards setting me more at liberty.

T. M.

As the time drew near for accomplishing his intended visit to Ireland, his mind seems to have been more and more deepened and humbled under the exercise which attended him on that account: the following ejaculation or prayer, found among his papers, appears to have been penned on this occasion.

O Lord God Almighty! the blessed Father and provider for thy children, and who hath abundantly promised to preserve and uphold those that rely upon thee; my soul bends in deep reverence before thy throne, and looks towards thee with the voice of supplication and prayer, humbly begging, that, for thy dear Son's sake, thou wouldest be graciously pleased to remember every tossed, tried, and exercised soul, and enable them to bear the turning of thy hand in judgement. And, O Lord! as thy controversy is against all unrighteousness, let thy holy fan winnow clean, entirely drive away and separate the chaff, that nothing may remain that is of a nature contrary to thy pure holy will. And, O Lord! thou who heardest the distressed cry of Ishmael in the wilderness, and who beheldest him when ready to faint, and
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causedst thy holy angel to administer to his necessities, be near in every trying hour, support under every exercise, comfort under every trouble, and sanctify affliction, both of body and mind, to those who have begun to walk in the way of regeneration; and keep them from falling either on the right hand or on the left; that, O blessed Lord! these poor souls may live as monuments of thy mercy and gracious care; may have to acknowledge to thy praise, that thou hast made way for them when there was none, hast set their spirits at liberty, hast disengaged them from the mire and clay, the sticking filth of the world, and hast been pleased to put a new song in their mouths, and to establish their goings in righteousness.

And I pray thee, O Father! if so unworthy a creature may presume to approach thee under that appellation, as thy regard is extended to all thy workmanship, be graciously pleased to afford a little succour to my tottering soul; deliver me from temptation, and preserve me from the paw of the bear. And Lord! as the secrets of all hearts are open to thy view, and the solitary track in which

I am led along is known to thee, open the way for my enlargement, and help my burdened heart, filled with the burden of thy word, and drawn to a distant land to discharge the growing debt to the glory of thy great name, the edification of thy church, and the consolation of my own poor soul: thou knowest all my tremblings; nor are my secret moanings hid from thy all penetrating eye; look with pity upon me.

And thou who calledst Samuel of old, and vouchsafedst to reveal thy secrets to him, so make my way plain before me, remove every stumbling block, and keep me from doubting in thy holy service. And now, Lord, with a humbled heart, I ascribe unto thee glory, and greatness, thanksgivings and praise, to the Lord God and the Lamb, who through the eternal spirit, art worthy for ever and ever. Amen.

In the year 1774, he accomplished his visit to Ireland; having part of the time the acceptable company of James Gough, then
a resident

a resident of Bristol, who arriving in Dublin after him, they both attended the spring national meeting there, and afterwards travelled together through most of that nation.

Of this visit we are not able to give so complete an account as we could wish; but hope the following extracts of letters from T. M. to his wife, will be acceptable to our readers.

Dublin, 11th of 4th Mo. 1774.

I wrote to thee from Liverpool last fourth day evening, by which thou wilt be informed of my journey to that place, and the extraordinary care and kindness of Friends there, in furnishing the more than necessary accommodations for the passage. We sailed from Liverpool fifth day morning about 9 o'clock, and had a long passage, (the wind being contrary) and through the favour of Providence, got safe here seventh day evening, about the 9th hour, and met with a very kind reception at the house of my friend William Taylor, in Dame Street. Yesterday, after the morning

meeting,

meeting, I received thine with great satisfaction and thankfulness, in that thou wast brought into a degree of resignation and quiet submission at my thus leaving thee; I hope the favour and kind notice of the ever blessed Father of the family will be over thee for good, and that thy health will be continued in the additional fatigue which falls to thy lot.

I expect to leave this city on fourth day, in order to take some meetings in the country, and go on my way to the Province meeting, for Munster, to be held at Clonmel next first and second day week, and from thence to come directly back to Dublin to the national meeting, to begin on the fourth day following; where I expect to meet my companion, and to join him in such service as may be pointed out to us. I am willing to be as particular as I well can, that thou mayst be informed of my journeying along; which I have thankfully to acknowledge, has in degree been under a sense of best help being with me, to my solid comfort, attended with an evidence of my being in my right place: and I am induced to hope, that he
 who

who has engaged me in the service, will be near to support me through every trial, and bring me to my native land in safety.

Dublin, 5th Mo. 5th, 1774.

I returned to this place last sixth day, in company with many friends from the country, to the national half years meeting, which began on seventh day, and ended last evening. The meeting was very large, and a favoured opportunity. Rachel Wilson found her mind drawn to attend it; and she landed last sixth day morning, and took up her quarters at my lodgings: her company was very instructive, and she had excellent service in the meeting. James Gough landed last second day evening, well. Rachel Wilson, Esther Tuke, Hannah Wigham, Thomas Colley, and poor I from England; Thomas Green, Samuel Neale, with many other friends of this nation, were at the meeting, in which I thought it my place to be silent, except a little matter which opened

in the select meeting. Rachel returns the first opportunity; and the rest of us are disposed of in different routes. My companion and self intend setting off to-morrow on our journey; which I hope we may get quite through in ten weeks at furthest: I mention this, that thou mayst not be disappointed in frequent expectations to no purpose; and hope to travel diligently, and get through as fast as I can: for although my mind is mercifully preserved in a settled calm as to every thing in this world, yet I am often induced to look towards my wife and habitation with a nearness and affectionate longing beyond expression; begging for thy preservation every way, and support under every exercise.

Tullamore, 5th Mo. 16th.

Whenever favoured to return, hope it will be to mutual satisfaction, as I feel renewed assistance from day to day in my stepping along; opening into service, and preserving my mind in humble quiet, and resignation to divine disposal.

Cork, 5th Mo. 30th.

I reached this city with my companion 7th day afternoon, having rode last week 182 miles, and been at six meetings; and yesterday morning, much to my satisfaction, received thine; and may now inform thee, that through the continuance of divine favour, I have in general been helped along with a degree of peace and true comfort. After the week day meeting to-morrow, we intend to separate for about three weeks; my companion inclining to stay here longer, and I proposing to go by Youghal, Clonmel and Shurebank, to Waterford, by first day; where I intend to rest some days, and from thence through the counties of Wexford and Wicklow; after which we think to join, and go through the province of Ulster together, which will finish the journey. I have had, through divine favour, on the whole, a good share of health: but have somewhat of a cold, which expect a few days will carry off.

The cold he here speaks of appears to have increased, and to have brought on a complaint, which confined him for about two weeks; after which he set forward, his companion accompanying him for some time, and pursuing the track spoken of in the above letter to his wife, appears to have completed his journey, and to have returned home in safety without his companion, after an absence of about 18 weeks.

The near affection and sympathy which subsisted between those two friends, and fellow travellers in the work of the gospel, appears not to have terminated with their visit to Ireland, but to have continued unshaken through the remaining vicissitudes of life.

We apprehend James Gough not long after performing this visit, removed from Bristol and settled with his family in Ireland, and that the following lines from Thomas Melhuish were addressed to him soon afterwards.

Taunton, 1st Mo. 1st, 1775.

DEAR FRIEND,

I began to be uneasy at not hearing from thee; when I received thy very acceptable letter of 9th ult. The account of thine and family's welfare, of thy peregrination, and the kind notice of our dear friends, was truly pleasing; which I have no doubt will be continued; as there is a mutual keeping on the bottom of sincerity and humility, and as those dispositions prevail, and a true friendship is established on this foundation, it will be more strongly rivetted by the ownings of divine regard, and the sheddings abroad of the love of God; in which we rejoice together as brethren of the same family, who have but one common interest in view; and this naturally leads us to share one with another in the seasons wherein sufferings may be necessary for a further refinement, and more meet preparation for that kingdom the joys whereof are divinely suited to the nature of pure and perfect spirits, made so through suffering: and in our travail in the
way

way towards this kingdom, I have seen, I was about to say, in the light of the Lord, there must be no claiming of pre-eminence, no contests about priority or seniority; but even those who through divine favour have so far advanced as to know what it is to be in the spirit on the Lord's day, must in the same meekness and humility, adopt the language of the favoured apostle, "I John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."

These remarks, as at many other times, very unexpectedly slip from me; but I consider the gospel as an inexhaustible fund of durable riches, and though we can preach no new doctrine, yet there is a beautiful display of divine mercy, in the variety of gifts it communicates to those who in simplicity embrace it: and whilst we thankfully admire the Lord's goodness in making us partakers of the fellowship of the mystery, let the ardent breathing of our spirits be for preservation on this innocent, child-like, foundation.

It is not worth my while to take much notice of the little uneasiness which occurred

at Bristol before thy leaving it; but I am very glad it is removed, and be assured, my dear friend, my heart is often with thee; and though we may not meet again in mutability, the Lord grant we may meet where we may part no more.

I have moved but little from home since my return from Ireland; but from a gentle draught in my own mind, have been at Claverham, and Exeter meetings, which were seasons worthy of deep commemoration; but I am much shut up about home; and I believe thou knowest that in our poor little meeting the life of truth is too little fought after, and we fare accordingly; but I labour after contentment in my allotment, with desires to be kept free from entanglement, that should there be, in the motion of life, a command given, "Go see how thy brethren fare," I may be at liberty so to do. But of any thing of this kind, I have yet no expectation, nor scarcely any view.

The following, though without date, appears to have been written some time after the foregoing, to the same friend.

DEAR FRIEND,

I may now acknowledge the receipt of thy two letters; the first by a friend from Dublin, and brought to me by T. P. on his return from London, the other in usual course, by post, both which were very acceptable: and I trust, to hear from thee, will always afford satisfaction to my mind.

I am truly glad that our valuable friends, _____ and _____ have been so eminently owned in their visit to your nation, and hope the same consoling protecting care will attend them to the conclusion of their labour with you; and indeed to the end of their race. I do not wonder at _____'s silence with you, as I apprehend her principal business in leaving home, was from a concern to visit the northern counties; in which being joined by _____, she found a freedom from the same draught of love and nearness, to
 accompany

accompany her to Ireland. And suppose, whilst under the feeling of unutterable mercy yet extended to a people forgetful of their duty, some may be constrained to lift up the voice like a trumpet, in order to shew them the state of alienation they stand in, and livingly to point out the cause thereof: if others equally loaded with the burden of their perverse spirits, under a clear discerning of the long suffering of God, should find it their duty to move up and down among them as signs and wonders; being dumb, and no otherwise reprovers, than by the deep, inward, mournful exercise of their spirits; does this point out any inconsistency in the orderings of infinite wisdom? Nay surely, let thee and me, my dear friends, steadfastly move in our proper allotments, having no will or desire, but to be found doing the will of God, as it may be clearly pointed out, and the way clearly opened.

I feel a little with thee in thy present fettered state, being myself under ties of that kind; which whilst I at times feel the inconvenience of, I lament the too general indolence, amongst so many, who have every
wished

wished for opportunity to do good; but their own wills not being mortified, that disposition is alive, in which the will of God can never be acceptably performed.

In the years 1776 and 1777, he was engaged with divers other friends, appointed by the Quarterly Meeting, in paying a religious visit to the families of Friends belonging thereto. Of this visit our friend kept minutes: by which it appears he had his share of the weight and service thereof. One circumstance it may not be amiss to mention, that whilst in the neighbourhood of Bristol, Thomas Melhuish went with some other friends, his companions, to see William Fry, of that city, who was then thought to be near his end; and concerning whom, he gives the following account.

In transcribing the foregoing notes of this visit, I think it may not be improper to remark in this place, that our dear friend W. F.
 departed

departed this life in about ten weeks after: whose removal as a valuable member of religious and civil society, must be sincerely regretted by all who knew his worth. As a Christian, he was deep in experience in the hidden, inward life: and although he was rich in this world, through faith he overcame the world, and was far removed from the spirit and nature of it. And as a minister of the gospel of peace, his conduct to all that know their foundation and keep on it, must appear truly amiable and instructive; exceedingly deep in travail, his spirit longed to feel the bubblings of the living spring, and in true silence to enjoy it and be made partaker thereof: and as he knew that nothing but what comes from God, can gather to God, he was remarkably cautious in his appearances; being filled with a religious care that no likenesses might be formed, he waited to feel the burden of the word; and when he stood up, the spirit of wisdom was with him, and the power of his God was upon him: so that it was abundantly evident, he was a minister, not of man, but of God. How I loved him!—and in this
 recollection

recollection of him as a Christian, a minister, and a friend, my mind is much affected, but yet comforted in a renewed feeling, that as his life, when in this world, was hid with Christ in God, he now triumpheth over sin, death, hell, and the grave, and is entered into his mansion.

In the year 1778, we find him travelling towards Northamptonshire and Leicestershire, and that in the year 1781, he visited the meetings of friends in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. The following extracts of letters, which he wrote to his wife while on this journey, will convey some account thereof.

Wycombe, (in Buckinghamshire)

3d Mo. 24th, 1781.

I wrote to thee last second day evening, from Marlborough, which we left third day afternoon; and have had meetings at Newbury, Reading, Henley, and this place, which we leave this afternoon, in order to be
at

at Aylesbury to-morrow, and at Leighton in Bedfordshire in the evening, and from thence to Ampthill into Lincolnshire, as directly as we well can. We are favoured with health, and attended with best help, opening the way to edifying labour in many places, mutually comfortable to friends and us.

Spalding, (Lincolnshire,) 4th Mo. 2d. 1781

Since I wrote last we have been at meetings at Aylesbury, Leighton, Ampthill, Huntingdon, Ives, Earith, and Ramsey, and came here seventh day evening; were at two meetings here yesterday, and have been this day to Gedney, (about 12 miles) to a meeting, and back here again, in order to go forward with other friends to the quarterly-meeting. Here are in this county about 14 particular meetings, some of them a good distance from each other, so that it will be two weeks hard work to get through it; in about which time, I hope to enter Yorkshire. We have been favoured with health, and my mare carries me bravely along; being helped from place to

to place to cast a little bread on the waters, under the reaching influence of divine love; which hope may be mercifully continued, and that we may be favoured to meet again in the enjoyment of best peace.

Hull, (Yorkshire,) 4th Mo. 19th.

Last evening we set our feet in Yorkshire, having crossed the large river Humber, from Lincolnshire, about five miles over to this town; and had a pretty good passage. At this place we have had a meeting this morning; a considerable number of friends belong to it, and suitable doctrine opened with a degree of baptizing sweetness and authority, tending much to open our way for further service in this county. As we did not get into this county at Thorn, as at first intended, I had an opportunity to send by a friend to N. D. to request him to forward the letter directed to him to this place; which came to hand this morning, and rejoiced I was to hear from thee, and to find thy health mercifully continued, as we have thankfully to
acknowledge

acknowledge ours has been; and that best help has greatly favoured us, owning the service in which we have been and are engaged; and enabling us to preach the gospel in demonstration of the spirit, and with power, to our great humiliation and abasement, and the praise of him who upholds and preserves, and who alone is worthy both now and for ever. Amen.

Scarborough, 4th Mo. 27th.

I often feel for thee with much affectionate nearness, in hopes that as I am thus separated from thee, (not of choice, but apprehension of duty) divine protection will guard thee, and make thy stepping along easy, as with deep thankfulness I have to acknowledge it has been graciously extended to me in this journey, affording succour and support in the needful time. We have been helped on in this county much to our own and friends satisfaction: after spending about three weeks more in it, I hope to get a discharge, and to set my face homewards.

York, 5th Mo. 4th.

After a reasonable repast, succeeding a laborious exercising meeting at this place, this forenoon, being recruited in my strength and quiet in my mind, I sit down to inform thee that we came here on fourth day evening, having had that day two meetings, at Malton and Thornton, both spending and exercising as to bodily strength, but favored with best succour and support. We left York yesterday morning, in company with several friends, to attend the monthly meeting for this district, about 15 miles off, which was a profitable season; and returned with them in the evening, in order for the meeting this day. We propose leaving this to-morrow morning, a meeting being appointed at a place about ten miles off; after which we propose going on about 15 miles, to North Cave, in order to be there on first day.

I wrote this day week from Scarborough: since, I begin to feel a comfortable release from my burthen, and hope in something more than a week to get out of this county and to hasten homewards,

After performing this visit he appears to have been for several years at and about home, being diligent in the attendance of religious meetings both for worship and discipline; and in the year 1784 was again engaged with divers other friends in visiting families in the county, which, as well as the former visit of the like kind, appears to have been attended with satisfaction and profit.

We apprehend he travelled about this time in company with our ancient valuable friend John Thomas, of Winghill, on a visit to friends in Devon and Cornwall, but of this not having any certain account, shall proceed to say that the next visit we find him engaged in was in the year 1795, when he visited the meetings pretty generally in most of the midland and northern counties: this took him up nearly three months, and being winter time, he appears to have been a good deal exposed to the weather in the northern parts, and to have suffered in his health; but was enabled to discharge the service required of him to his own solid peace, and we doubt not to the comfort and edification of friends, as will more fully appear by the fol-

lowing extracts of letters to his wife, while on this journey.

Melksham, 10th Mo. 23d, 1795.

I got here last evening, agreeable to my expectation; I have been at meeting to-day, and felt a secret evidence accompanying my mind, that by waiting in faith and patience in a steady humble seeking after divine help, all will be well, and that I am going in the way of my duty. Thus, amidst the various tossings I have lately passed through, am now favoured with a calm peaceful mind.

Ackworth, 5th Mo. 11th.

We got here last evening, about five o'clock, thirteen miles from Doncaster, where we had an appointed meeting in the morning, favoured in a good degree by the great Master of our assemblies; indeed, it is with humble

ble gratitude I thankfully acknowledge the continued renewal of his gracious regard from meeting to meeting; opening as it were into the store-room of his inexhaustible treasury, and furnishing therefrom every needful supply.

J. H. recovered so speedily as to be able to attend the meeting at Nottingham on first day, which was large, and after a time of deep inward exercise, I was enabled to stand up, and began to the following purport:

Supposing this to be the beginning of a time of general calamity; supposing the overflowing scourge, which had spread desolation upon desolation in many other places, should be permitted to reach the inhabitants of this highly favoured land, in a manner different from what it had hitherto done; and supposing the Almighty, in his unspeakable compassion, should commission his angel or messenger to go forth as with a writers ink-horn, to set a mark of deliverance on those who loved him in sincerity, and really feared his name, my very soul within me was grieved to consider how small a number of those under our name, in many places, were likely to become the
favoured

favoured objects of his divine protection and compassionate regard.

In further opening this affecting subject, solemnity covered the meeting, and though I was filled with consolation, yet my mind was so affected, that my spirit almost sunk within me, and I retired to my lodgings and wept.

I propose to go to York on seventh day, and from thence to proceed through the county of Durham into Northumberland, and so to return through Cumberland.

His next letters give an account of his getting to York, and from thence through Durham, &c. into Cumberland, with but little remarkable, except that of getting along to good satisfaction. In a letter from Cockermouth, dated 12th of 12th Mo. he writes thus:

My movements through this county have been as quick as seemed prudent, and with a deep sense of humble gratitude have thank-
fully

fully to acknowledge the continued merciful aid of the blessed Head of the church, so as to answer the purpose of the visit in casting bread on the waters, with the sweet returns of consolation to my own mind.

The meeting at ——— on fifth day was so remarkable, that as I make no minutes of my journey except as to distances, I am inclined to mention it here, as it may be preserved when I am gone to where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary soul will find rest. I began thus:

“ The history of our society furnishes us with an account of two friends, who after the dawning, or rather clear breaking forth of gospel light in the last century, after a long night of apostacy, and thick darkness, were prepared and sent forth from this part of the nation, towards those parts where my accustomed habitation now is; this subject, with the beginning of a testimony which one of them had to deliver, has particularly impressed my mind in this meeting, and if my recollection is right, was to the following purport: I proclaim spiritual war against the inhabitants of the earth, who are in the fall

separation from God: and (as if he would have enforced the sound of his voice from one end of the earth to another) added, and I prophesy to the four winds of heaven.

This beginning opened the way to profitable labour, in which doctrine distilled as the dew, solemnity covered the meeting, and filled my mind with thankfulness, and a consolation I cannot express.

The passage alluded to may be found in the account or journal of J. Camm and J. Audland, or in C. Marshall's works.

His next letter, dated 16th of 12th Mo. after giving some account of his journey, and the last meeting he had attended, goes on thus:

I took leave of Cumberland with a quiet peaceful mind, and of a valuable elder, who had accompanied me to the last meeting, with near affection.

In a letter from Kendal, 12th Mo. 24th, he gives an account of his being laid up with a cold, taken through riding in violent wind and rain; but by the kind care of the friends where he lodged, soon recruited, and set forward for Lancaster; in a letter from which place, dated 12th Mo. 27th, he writes as follows:

I am now in the way towards home, and this is cause of rejoicing to me, as I doubt not but it will be to thee and others of the family; for so opposite to my natural inclination is this mode of travelling, that were it not that the love of Christ constraineth and that amidst its inconveniences, it is attended with a peace which the world knows not of, the entering on a journey of this sort feels as the bitterness of death; but so resigned at present is my will, that I submit with cheerfulness to the lengthening out of this and even taking my life as in my hand, and going on another if it again become necessary.

From Lancaster he passed on to Manchester, Coalbrook Dale, and Worcester, having acceptable service, and so returned home in safety.

Towards the latter end of the year 1798, he found his mind engaged to visit again many of the counties through which he had passed, in his former journey, with this difference, that in some parts he passed on without having many meetings; and feeling himself comfortably discharged from this service, returned home. The following short extracts from some of the letters, written to his wife while engaged therein, may not be unacceptable.

9th Mo. 17th, 1798.

I have not found any occasion to lay by on account of my health; and through deep wading exercise of mind to be dipped into a clear sense of the state of things, way hath opened to my great relief, and my soul magnifies the succouring arm, still at times made bare for the help of those who trust in it.

10th Mo. 18th.

Having met with several of my old acquaintance, to whom I was in the last journey nearly united, we have rejoiced in seeing each other; and parted in the renewed feeling of that love which is the bond of Christian union and fellowship.

Without entering into many particulars, which cannot convey much information to thee, with humble thankfulness I may acknowledge the ever blessed Father's care, sustaining in every trial, supporting in every conflict, and furnishing strength sufficient for the day; may my life be devoted to his service, and every thing within me; all the faculties of the mind unite in blessing the ever worthy name.

12th. Mo. 6th.

Blessed for ever and ever be the God of my life, for the merciful support vouchsafed in this journey, preserving in the heights and in

depths, enabling in reverent humble gratitude to set up another Ebenezer or stone of memorial, with an inscription that he who runs may read, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped."

The only remaining visit in which he appears to have been engaged at a distance from home, was in the spring of the year 1800, when he visited the meetings in the county of Suffex, with some others in his way out and home; a letter from him to his wife, while engaged therein, gives the following account.

Lewes, 4th Mo. 22d. 1800.

There are only six meetings in this county, five of which are now passed much to the relief of my mind, and I contemplate a speedier return to thee than I expected, with heart felt gratitude; for although when under a clear apprehension of being called forth and engaged in the service, and under the influence of divine constraint enabled to found
the

the alarm, and endeavour to rouse the lethargic from their beds of ease, I have sometimes thought it would be pleasant to end my days therein; yet when the duty is discharged, whether at a greater or less distance, or at home, to feel the dedication accepted, and Christ's legacy of peace sealed as it were on our spirits, what cause of heart felt thankfulness: and although deep exercise hath often attended my mind, yet I reverently rejoice in the merciful sustaining share thereof vouchsafed to me.

Having thus attended our friend through most of his religious labours, we shall now subjoin extracts from some of his letters, &c. on religious subjects: the following appears to have been written to a friend and his wife, in the north, after his visit to those parts, in the year 1781.

Taunton, 7th Mo. 16th, 1781.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Soon after my return, I thought of writing to you, having often had to remember you with gratitude and near affection, and as your hearts were open to receive us as disciples, and plentifully to minister to our wants, as such in looking towards you I have frequently wished that both the prophets and disciples reward may be yours; and as my life was, when in your parts, a life of mourning, and the bitterness of the message was often as the bitterness of death: in this state of deep humiliation and abasement, your kindness and near sympathy were as the healing balm, or a reviving cordial. Thus it is poor travellers are led along: sometimes the hand or power of the Lord is upon them, and very evidently to their own understanding, and that of others, accompanies them in their service: in times of weakness their judgment becomes more clouded, their faith faileth them, and they go as for their life, from the power of Jezebel;
they

they seek to hide themselves by a day's journey in the wilderness; the juniper tree affords a shadow, but yet in this state of emptiness unto death, and spiritual desertion, as wilful transgression is kept clear from, weakness is not imputed as a crime, and he whose unspeakable mercy is over all his works, considers them as proper objects of divine regard: thus it fared with the prophet Elijah, after an extraordinary service, before his appearing upon the mount of God at Horeb, where his faith was renewedly confirmed, and his understanding more clearly opened as to the true state of things; and thus it fares with many now, for as the Lord's messages by his servants spring from the same ground, and are intended to promote the same cause now as formerly, the same preparation is necessary to bring the poor creature into a proper degree of fitness to go on his errands, to plead with, to invite, to expostulate, and finally to proclaim his controversy with a stiff-necked and rebellious generation; and although for their obstinacy, for the clearing of themselves and him who sent them forth, some may be permitted to shake
off

off the dust of their feet against them, and turn to the Gentiles, yet the day of their visitation not being finally passed over their heads, others may be raised up amongst them, and as a sign, may be directed to take their bread weeping, and mingle their drink with their tears: and there is no doubt with me in the present state of things, that whoever is preserved in the true line of service, will have very narrow tracks and deep wadings to pass through; but in and under all this, my beloved friends, is cause of rejoicing, that they who suffer with Christ, are to be admitted to reign with him, and what a painful ministry did he pass through! how long was his preparation; how simple his entrance upon service, and in the prosecution of it; how contrary was he led to the spirit of the times in which he made his appearance. A few simple fishermen; some who by reason of their maladies were the objects of public scorn; a few poor women, seemed to be the chief of his proselytes; for though many thousands from curiosity at times followed him, though in mercy he fed them by an amazing miracle, yet the far greater part were

were closed up in unbelief, and perhaps some of those who had tasted of his miraculous bounty, joined in the cry, “Crucify him; Crucify him.”

To —————

It is now about 24 years ago that being a stranger ye took me in and admitted me to a place in your friendship, and although the acquaintance formed in consequence thereof was near, yet being soon after stationed in my allotment at a distance from you, I had but seldom an opportunity of manifesting how much I felt myself obliged, or of discovering my grateful attachment to you, in consequence of favours repeatedly conferred: thus circumstanced, I have beheld five of the much loved family one after another, paying the debt of nature, some of whom I may truly acknowledge, in Solomon’s language, stuck closer to me than a brother; but the last sorrowful event, the removal of thy dear brother, was particularly
affecting,

affecting, and the circumstances attending it,
 loudly proclaim the uncertainty of all human
 enjoyments ; retired from business, and blest
 with a heart to communicate and do good,
 innocently disposed to share in the pleasures
 of society, and relish the satisfaction of visit-
 ing his acquaintance and near kinsfolks, ac-
 cording to the flesh : behold him on this
 journey, amidst all the satisfactions attending
 it, summoned to a more delicious banquet,
 and to drink to the full of those rivers of
 pleasure that are at God's right hand for
 evermore : under this consideration, though
 his friends loss be to his gain, yet as in times
 of weakness it is difficult to dwell in the
 true spirit of resignation, without which we
 may mourn our loss too much. And view-
 ing thee now in thy retired situation, depriv-
 ed of his agreeable society, my mind has
 affectionately remembered thee in very near
 sympathy, with fervent desires that this trial
 may be truly sanctified, and thy mind pre-
 served thoroughly awakened to seek after
 comfort and support from that hand which
 alone can minister the same to any purpose ;
 this, my beloved friend, was the joy of thy
 younger

younger years, and this I doubt not at all, is now the alone source from which thou art expecting to derive consolation; and were the spirit of grace and supplication poured forth upon me, and were it in my power to direct the language thereof upon this occasion, it would run in the channel of most earnest affectionate wishes, that the bitter potion might be sweetened with a double portion of the consolations of the Holy Ghost, witnessed as a precious pledge of your again meeting where there is no more sorrow, no more death, or separation, but where the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, is known to feed his redeemed flock, and to lead them to the fountains of living waters.

Accept, my dear friend, in the reviving of the spirit of true friendship, this little tribute thereof; and although we are so circumstanced as not to be likely to be much in one anothers company, yet let me have a share in thy remembrance; being, respecting the nature of the service I am engaged in, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; feeling the increasing weight and burden of the word, frequently to call from the tenderest

dereft connexions in human life, and to leave every concern in it; dipped under a painful sense of the working of the mystery of iniquity; and led to bear the iniquity of the house of Judah and Israel like the prophet formerly, lying on his side; under this concern, an exercising journey through part of divers counties, lately fell to my lot, but pointed more particularly to Lincolnshire and Yorkshire; from which, through the merciful succour of him, who called forth, we were favoured to return with great peace of mind.

Under a renewed feeling of the Father's love, a fresh uniting and reviving former very tender feelings, do I salute thee, and conclude,

Thy very affectionate friend,

T. M.

To _____

Taunton, 11th Mo. 18th, 1786.

ESTEEMED FRIEND,

If respecting our own growth a deep attention to have the foundation well laid, and

to build thereon according to the direction of the great master builder, is necessary; if to stand close in our ranks, and watch with diligence the direction and orders of the captain, is to deserve the appellation of good soldiers, let us of the foremost rank be exemplarily conspicuous herein, and endeavour to awaken in the hindermost classes an inward subjection to the principle of regeneration, which in its progress in the mind, gradually separates from the love, the spirit, nature, and friendship of this world: for although a conformity to the truth has generally established a reputation among men, yet it has been by a conduct which has been the means of opening that eye in them which can see the beauty of holiness, though themselves are not in the nature of it. In this rambling of my pen, a mournful prospect presents, as to the succeeding generation: here, were my head waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, I might weep night and day; but what will this avail, or can the torrent of corruption be stemmed thereby? but so much has the gloomy prospect overwhelmed my mind, that I am almost sinking under the load, and if I
have

have at any time been furnished with weapons to wield in the warfare of the Lamb, they are now ready to fall out of my hands.

To persevere in those times with becoming stability, to magnify the gift, the grace, in careful improvement to the honour of the blessed giver, I affectionately wish may be thy happy experience; and the oversight of the flock, brought under thy notice, be attended to in the spirit of a true feeder; and discipline in the power of it, endeavoured to be maintained in a zeal, cultivated by that wisdom, which discovers how to lay judgement to the line, and righteousness to the plumline; and as far as my capacity reaches, I desire sincerely to unite with thee herein on this ground, and should rejoice whilst the edge of it is turned to prune and lop off a variety of superfluous branches, if it is also directed powerfully to strike at the root, from whence these evils spring, without partiality.

To conclude; let unity, a oneness of heart and mind in the life, prevail in ministers and elders, to the banishing all shyness and distance, and as brethren of the same family, children of one father, let us unite in lifting
up

up the Lord's standard, and bear the ark in the bottom of Jordan; and with spirits clothed with humility and fervent zeal, supplicate the Most High to spare his heritage a little longer, and take away the reproach from his people.

I am, with near affection,

Thy friend,

THOMAS MELHUISE.

To Friends in the County of —————

DEAR FRIENDS,

I cannot easily forget the deep exercise which attended my mind in my late travel through that part of your county I was again led to visit; and the remembrance of the near unity I felt with many livingly concerned friends in their trying allotments, hath been very precious, as well as that the rawness, leanness, and barrenness of many in profession with us so painfully affected me
that

that my strength seemed taken from me, and rottenness, as it were, entered into my bones. Now to those who were partakers with me in my bonds, does the salutation of that love reach, which being the product of a divine principle in the mind, leavens every thing into its own nature; and oh, may such in whom this birth has taken place, be careful not to indulge or nurse, either in themselves, or those under their care, any thing opposite thereto; for this wounds the pure life, and hinders its growth; and this care and concern as it is abode under, will manifest itself, and its exercise will break forth on all occasions; how will the ministers, rightly anointed and renewedly qualified for that purpose, blow the trumpet in Zion! how will the elders assemble and endeavour to gather the children; and when thus assembled and gathered, humbled under a sense of their own weakness, and the need they have of that care which can alone preserve, looking towards those who stand at a distance, and are yet ungathered! how earnest at times will their intreaties be to the throne of grace, in a language similar to this, “ Spare
thy

thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach."

An anxious desire has attended my mind that the youth may be brought more closely under the notice of their parents or those more advanced in years, and that more earnest endeavours may be used to bring their tender minds into an acquaintance with and subjection to the principle of truth; if this be effected and their attention thereto quickened by the consistent example of those who ought to be watching over them for good, one great point will be gained in the prospect of future stability, and their understandings be likely to improve in things useful in religious and civil society; and as we differ from others in principle and practice, the ground of this dissent (of which none need be ashamed) will be clearly understood, and those who are now behind hand in every respect be able to give a reason of the hope that is in them with meekness and fear, and the fatal tendency of mixed marriages be clearly seen, and carefully avoided.

The grace we recommend the attention of the people to, is a lively instructive principle,
and

and being a free gift, in mercy communicated as it is believed in and occupied with, wonderfully opens the understanding; by this many of the worthy ancients in your county became wiser than their teachers, and were made eminent instruments in their day for promoting the knowledge of the truth and its spreading amongst mankind, by which many were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to that of God: and I feel an increasing concern on your account, that the line of succession may be preserved, and by the power of living faith many may be roused to inquire, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?"

You will accept these few hints as proceeding from a real concern for all your growth and increase with the increases of God, from

Your affectionate friend,

THOMAS MELHUISH.

Taunton, 3d. Mo. 11th, 1799.

The following eight were addressed to the same Friend.

12th Mo. 25th, 1799.

Although the weight of my own exercise, seems enough to support under, yet thou wilt perceive by this thou hast been the companion of my thoughts, and it has been with sincere desires that thy way may gradually open to discharge the little trust reposed in thee with fidelity; and do not seek to get from under the Master's hand or eye, and be cautious to whom thou openest thy exercises, or before whom thou spreadest the many difficulties with which thy progress seems embarrassed, and be sure guard against unreasonable discouragement or despondency, because if we have been favoured with the knowledge of the truth, the gracious design of being so favoured is to introduce into the liberty which it gradually establisheth in, a willingness to serve the Lord in the way of his requireings. May this be thy comfortable
D
experience,

experience, and the grace or favour magnified through thy co-operation therewith.

12th Mo. 28th, 1799.

If I notice thee with affectionate regard and sympathy, it is my duty to do so; were it in my power, I would lead thee into the green pastures, and cause thee to rest beside the still waters; but the blessed Shepherd of Israel will do this for thee in his own time, when he has led thee about and instructed thee, and taught thee wisdom and patience, by the things thou hast suffered: it may be a season of darkness, and thou mayst be ready to inquire with earnestness, “ Watchman, what of the night ? ” Why, behold, the morning cometh, and may it be to thee a morning without clouds: dispelling, for a season, thy doubts and anxious fears; for I long to hear thee adopt this language, “ He brought me into his banquetting house, and his banner over me was love.”

1st. Mo. 16th, 1800.

Thy little communication was very acceptable, pointing out a little return of love, of light and life, from him who is the adorable and inexhaustible fountain of it. I knew he had not cast thee off, and that when judgment had humbled and produced a thorough willingness, to be any thing rather than forfeit his favour, he would yet remember mercy, strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; but the true soldiers are to be inured to discipline, and gradually learn to endure hardness; in a state of infancy thou wast dandled upon the knee, and the breast of consolation was held forth, and thou drank as it were thy fill; but this season is past; thou art now to work for thy bread; and the more willingly thou takest to labour, the easier thou wilt find it; and be sure mind it be under the Masters direction, for I expect thou wilt not be allowed the privilege of chusing for thyself. I have known some, as seemingly weak as thee, who have so improved, that in time they have been put to thresh the mountains.

2d Mo. 28th, 1800.

And now, my dear friend, a desire attends my mind on thy behalf, that wherever thou art, or in whatever station thou mayst for the present fix, a steady care may rest that the day's work goes on with the day, and as thy former omissions are blotted out, and the judgment seat so covered with mercy that no charge of disobedience is retained against thee, and much having been forgiven, that such a degree of love may be excited, and gratitude so awakened, as that a thorough resignation may take place, to follow wherever the ever-blessed Shepherd may lead; in this state of mind, he will not be unmindful of thee, if in the line of thy duty thou pass, as through the fire, the flames thereof shall not kindle to thy hurt; or if through the waters, the floods shall not overwhelm. Be fervent in spirit, diligent in business, and of good cheer.

10th Mo. 29th, 1800.

Such an opportunity offering, I am inclined to address a few lines to thee, lest thou shouldest in a season of poverty and weakness, indulge a thought, that my friendship and affectionate respect are in any degree lessened; this is by no means the case; if thou art poor, I am so likewise, and desire to be thy companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. Now it is worthy of remark, and affords encouragement, that when that eminent servant of the Lord, John the baptist, being in prison, and in a state of doubting, although he had seen Christ, and borne ample testimony to the permanency of that dispensation which was ushered in by him, sent to inquire, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" Our blessed Lord, to remove his doubts, directed the messengers to go and tell John the things which they saw and heard, referring to the miracles daily wrought by him, and closing the list with this mark of favour, that "to the poor the gospel is preached. Now this preaching of the gospel,

as it is received and believed in, being the manifestation of its power unto salvation, what an encouragement to the poor, on whom this privilege seems in an especial manner conferred: now to us, my dear friend, this gospel hath been preached; let us, therefore, rejoice in our poverty, and in humble confidence, apply to him who is the friend of publicans and sinners, who takes those into his protection that are poor and contrite, and tremble at his word.

6th Mo. 23d. 1801.

When we may meet again, is uncertain, and however deep my future plunges may be, yet if it be in Jordan's purifying streams, it will, as to myself, end well; but I sometimes think that long before this no spot or blemish ought to have remained with me; if any of Lebanon's heights remain, I feel willing at times that all the doors may be opened, and every obstruction removed to the fires entering and devouring all the cedars;

dars; amidst all this weakness and infirmity attending me, my desires for thee are, that Israel's God may bless thee indeed, and enlarge thy coast. Should we be favoured to get into and continue in that disposition of mind, to which the blessing will assuredly extend, may we not indulge a humble hope, that the same mercy and compassion, which relieved the impotent man, who had long waited at Bethesda's pool, will in due time reach us, with " Arise, take up thy bed, and walk."

9th Mo. 25th. 1802.

I was pleased to find thou hadst been favoured with courage and strength to get out a little amongst thy friends, and I affectionately desire for thee such an increase of it as that the day's work may keep pace with the day; that thy dedication to the cause of truth may be accompanied with resigned willingness to submit to every constrained endeavour to promote it, and by moving in the inno-

cence and simplicity of a child, gradually feel thy capacity for service a little enlarged, and thy obedience rewarded with an increase in the joy of God's salvation, in thy own particular experience. Oh, my dear friend, let nothing move thee from the sure foundation; may the constraining love of Christ be the ground of all thy labours, and prove a sort of check to that forward spirit which is lamentably spreading in our borders.

12th Mo. 18th, 1802.

And now, my dear friend, as thou hast been prevailed on to put thy hand to the plow, take care thou do not look back; in all thy movements, may the pillar of cloud by day, and pillar of fire by night, be thy direction, and sure defence; and as supplies of strength will often, in mercy and unfailing kindness, unexpectedly open, so let it increase a greater degree of dedication and devotedness of mind to pursue every gentle yet clear opening in the line of duty.

The following four are to another Friend.

Such is the nature of the Christian warfare, if I understand it right, that every progressive advancement therein, is accompanied with its peculiar difficulty or trial, wisely intended to keep the creature humble, and to excite such a constant watchfulness, that it may never be off its guard: now it is not easy for me to describe the satisfaction I felt when last at ———, at the evidence conveyed to my mind, that a living child was brought forth, or the fervent desires which attended, that the pure birth might not be hurt by unskilful nursing. I very often cast a mournful eye over the state of things in this county in this respect, on seeing some who were likely at one time to ripen into usefulness, so imprudently pushed forward, as to have far overgrown their strength, and from their size appearing as men, yet as to capacity and judgment, are on trial found to be scarcely children; but, my very dear child, I am confident thou hast otherwise learned Christ, and knowest that his constraining love is the

only ground of all true ministry, and have a comfortable hope, that thou wilt settle on this foundation: and however small the offering may be, yet when brought forth under the power of divine constraint, how edifying, how comfortable to the living in Israel; and oh! may the pure life in thee salute, and thereby strengthen the same immortal birth in others; but in order to thy growth in this root of living ministry, learn to bear in patience, the turnings of the Lord's hand, and the winnowing of the fan; cleave to him with all thy heart, and although he will humble and reduce, and bring self into subjection, and may permit Satan to buffet, and sift, and as it were to hedge up the way, yet he will mercifully open the way, where no way appears, and a well of refreshment, as in the midst of the desert.

I was pleased to receive a few lines from thee; further than this I know not what to say, unless to express the travail of my spirit for thy preservation, and that thou mayst be
 so

so supported and strengthened in every trial, and against every temptation, as to add dignity to the cause, on the behalf of which thou hast been called to lift the standard; if thou art passing through the furnace, heated in thy apprehension seven times more than usual, bear it, my dear child, with patience; the design of Infinite Wisdom therein is to purge away all the dross, take away all the tin, and remove all the reprobate silver, that nothing may remain but what may be fit to bear the royal impression. At about thy age I met with flatterers, and was sometimes beset with false friends, who, in seeming kindness, tried to push me forward into what they called service, out of the right line; if any such come in thy way, beware of them, and let me conclude with the remark of one formerly, "Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own understanding; acknowledge him sincerely in all thy ways, and most assuredly he will direct thy paths."

11th Mo. 1st. 1801.

I expect, my dear child, thy present situation is as trying as thou canst well bear from fatigue of body, as well as exercise of mind; but allow me to say, the Shepherd of Israel has taken thee under his care, and he will deal as gently with thee as will be proper for thy real good, and the attaining that experience which will be every way profitable. When thy strength seems utterly to fail, and all the powers of nature give way, he will carry thee as in his arms; and if thou prove stedfast in thy love, rescue from the lion and the bear. If the kingdom is to be entered through many tribulations, and the right to sonship ascertained through chastening, who would wish to loose the earnest of this precious inheritance, or being called, so slide from under the yoke, as not to be admitted amongst the few chosen? How copious is this very interesting subject, my heart is full of it, with ardent wishes for thy safety, and that though the battle press hard, and there be fears from without, and doubts within, yet clothed with humility, as a garment

ment in the reverent dependance and patient resignation it leads into, thou mayest witness a being made more than a conqueror, through him that hath loved thee.

5th Mo. 2d. 1802.

As to myself, I think sometimes from infirmity of body, and exercise of mind, I am just worn out, and could quietly resign to the grave, but from an apprehension that some part of the day's work remains undone, although sufficient clearness to warrant an attempt for setting about it has not hitherto been afforded; but, my dear child, there is perhaps sometimes a little matter for thee and me to do at home, and I am strongly inclined to press on thy mind a submissive attention to every clear command to labour; for if in thy progress unfaithfulness is suffered to prevail, an effectual bar is laid in the way to a going forward, and any attempt to step out of the right line frequently entangles amongst briars and thorns, which
 tear

tear and wound severely, and many have long borne the smart thereof, till divine mercy has interposed on their behalf.

The present state of the ministry amongst us, and in forward spirits, the prevalence of a disposition to recommend themselves to notice by meddling with unfelt truths, requires a strong guard on all the rightly anointed for this service, that their conduct, as well as weight of expression, may as far as in them lies, be a check to that spirit, the tendency of whose movements is to exalt self, and to lead to a complacency and a kind of rejoicing out of the cross of Christ; but, dear ——, let wisdom, divine wisdom, (that which is said to dwell in holy souls, and to make them friends of God and prophets) be thy guide, and then divine strength will assist thy trembling steps, and furnish the necessary aid for every occasion,

Taunton, 4th Mo. 11th, 1802.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Such has been the oppressed sinking state of my health for the last month, that I have been induced to look more towards the grave than to entertain prospects which require more ability of body, and persevering firmness of mind than I am now favoured with; not that I am painfully discouraged, for though infirmity of body, accompanied with a distressing gloom over the mind be very trying, yet so suited are those feelings to a state of probation, that it is unwise not to expect them; or having entered on the Christian race, to suppose we shall find the path constantly strewed with roses, and having engaged in the Lamb's warfare, to think we shall not feel the difficulties attendant on a situation exposed to Satan's fiery darts; since it is by watchfulness, by faith, by patience, accompanied with divine aid, that victory is obtained. Whatever the issue of this concern may be respecting myself, whether being called to mourning, it may end
only

only in solemn silent intercession on behalf of those on whose account it originated, or may yet so spread and ripen, as to make it necessary to give up all to follow in the path of duty; whatever way it may turn, I desire to leave it.

Thus, my dear friend, I open my heart without reserve, on a subject which has proved a close trial, and my mind being favoured with resignation, have no other desire but to go or stay, as best Wisdom may direct.

Although it appears our dear friend was making some arrangements in his family concerns, with a view to have proceeded on this visit in the spring of the year 1803, had life and health permitted, yet before that period arrived, it pleased Providence to remove him from works to rewards, after a short illness. About a week before his decease, he attended a monthly meeting, held at Taunton, in usual health, in which he appeared in testimony in a lively weighty manner; and the following day was taken ill of
a disorder

a disorder, of a very painful nature, which soon confined him to his bed, but which he bore with patience and composure of mind, expressing but little to those about him, except repeating that saying of our Lord's, " In my fathers house are many mansions, " and that he trusted there was a mansion prepared for him, and that he was going to join many of his dear friends who were gone before him.

He departed this life the 16th of 12th month, 1802, and his remains were interred the 20th of the same, in Friend's burial ground, near Taunton, aged about 65, and a minister upwards of 40 years.

F I N I S.

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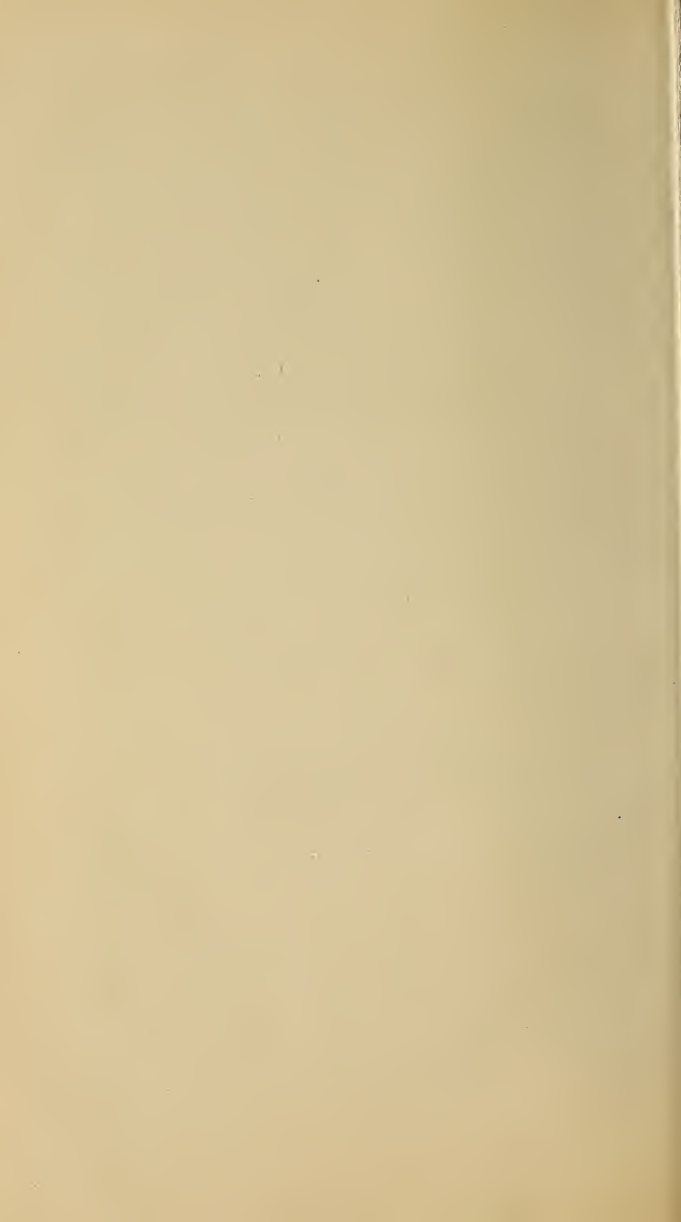
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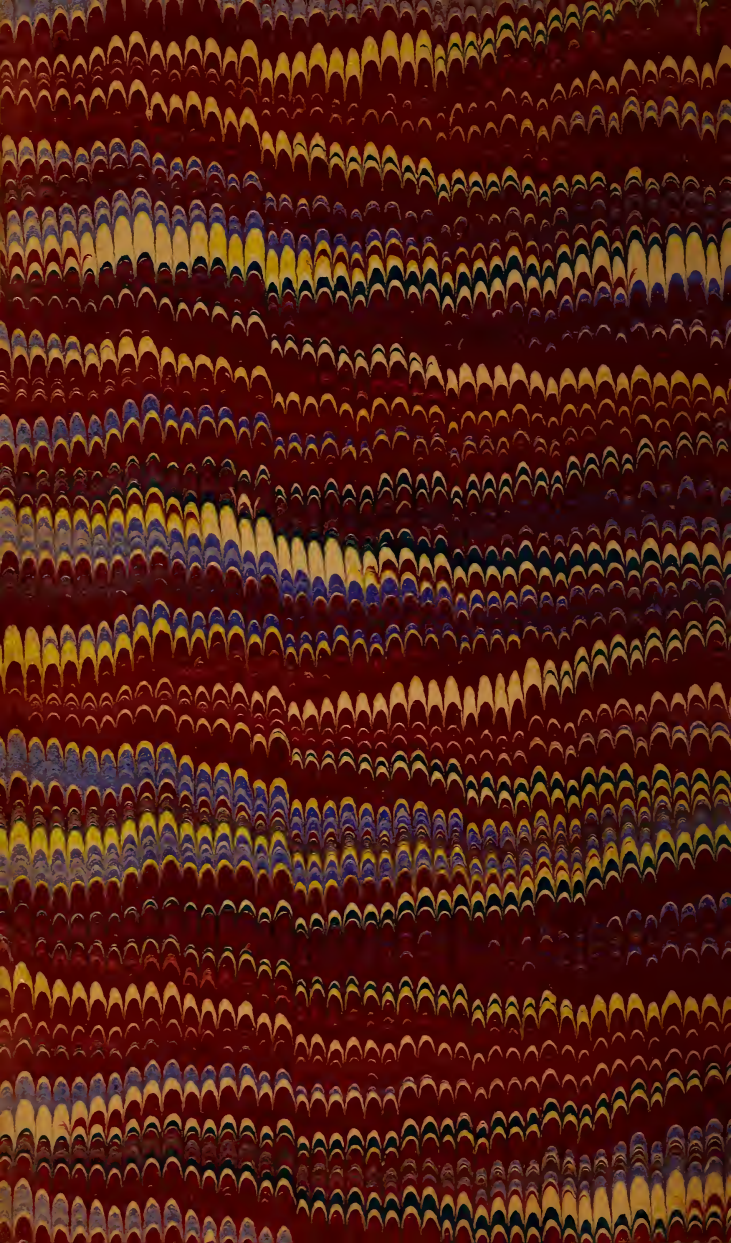


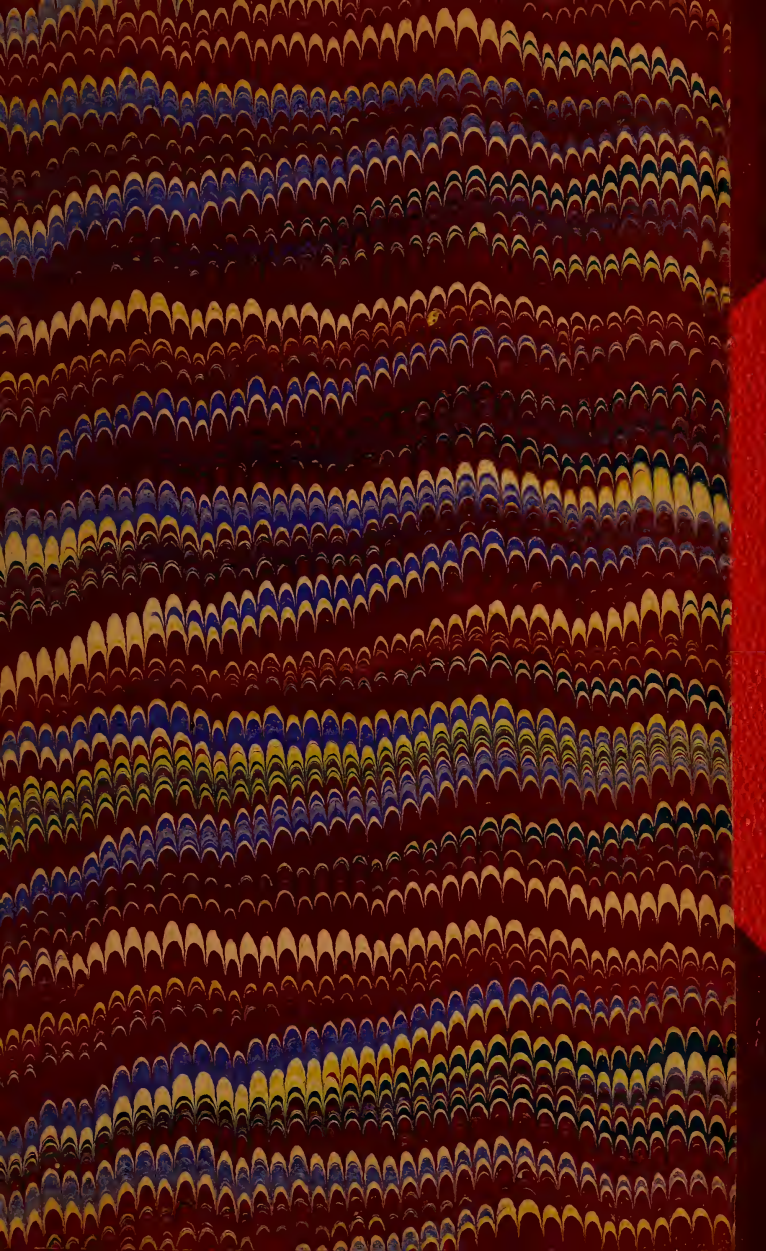


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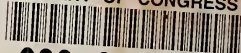
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